

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02

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FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6871

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, ECON, HO

SUBJECT: REACTION TO HONDURAN MINIMUM WAGE DECREE

REF: (A) TEGUCIGALPA 1648; (B) TEGUCIGALPA 595

1. THE PUBLICATION OF THE GOH MMINIMUM WAGE DECREE HAS RESULTED IN COMMENT ON THE PART OF THE VARIOUS SECTORS OF HONDURAN SOCIETY. HUMBERTO LEON, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE HONDURAN PRIVATE ENTERPRISE COUNCIL (COAEP) HAS BEEN QUOTED IN THE PRESS AS BEING TOTALLY IN ACCORD WITH THE NEW WAGE LEVELS. SPOKESMEN FOR BOTH THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INDUSTRIALISTS (ANDI) AND THE TEGUCIGALPA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HAVE COMMENTED FAVORABLY ON THE NEW LAW.

2. ON THE GOVERNMENTAL SIDE, THE GOH HAS SPOKEN OUT IN DEFENSE OF THE NEW LAW IN THE PERSONS OF CHIEF OF STATE LOPEZ, TREASURY MINISTER ACOSTA, MINECON BENNATON AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MINLAB FONSECA. LOPEZ SAID THAT THE LAW IS BASED ON NATIONAL

REALITY BUT ADDED THAT THE LAW MIGHT BE AMENDED IF ERRORS ARE INDICATED BY THE LAW'S PERFORMANCE.

3. THE ONLY SOUR NOTE CONCERNING THE LAW WAS SOUNDED BY SOME DELEGATES TO THE FESITRANH CONGRESS IN SAN PEDRO SULA APRIL 19. ALTHOUGH THE CONGRESS HAD NOT TAKEN A POSITION SOME UNIONISTS THOUGHT THAT ESTABLISHED SALARY LEVELS WERE TOO LOW. REYES RODRIGUEZ, PRESIDENT OF THE FESITRANH CAMPESENO AFFILIATE, ANACH, ATTACKED THE 2 LEMPIRA DAILY MINIMUM ESTABLISHED FOR AGRICULTURAL WORKERS AS BEING INADEQUATE. HE ALSO COMMENTED THAT THE LAW SHOULD NOT HAVE EXCLUDED DOMESTIC SERVANTS FROM ITS COVERAGE.

4. COMMENT: REACTIONS WERE MUTED ON BOTH SIDES OF THE QUESTION. NEITHER COHEP NOR FESITRANH IS IN A STRONG POSITION TO CRITICIZE THE NEW LAW SINCE LABMIN FONSECA TOLD LABOFF THAT BOTH COHEP AND FESITRANH'S CELEO GONZALEZ HAD CLEARED DRAFT DESCRIBED REFTTEL B. ONE PROBLEM WHICH MAY DEVELOP, ACCORDING TO LABMIN FONSECA, IS MASSIVE LAYOFFS PRIOR TO LAW'S EFFECTIVE DATE. LABOR MINISTRY DOES NOT HAVE ADEQUATE RESOURCES TO AGGRESSIVELY POLICE NEW LAW THROUGHOUT COUNTRY.
SANCHEZ

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